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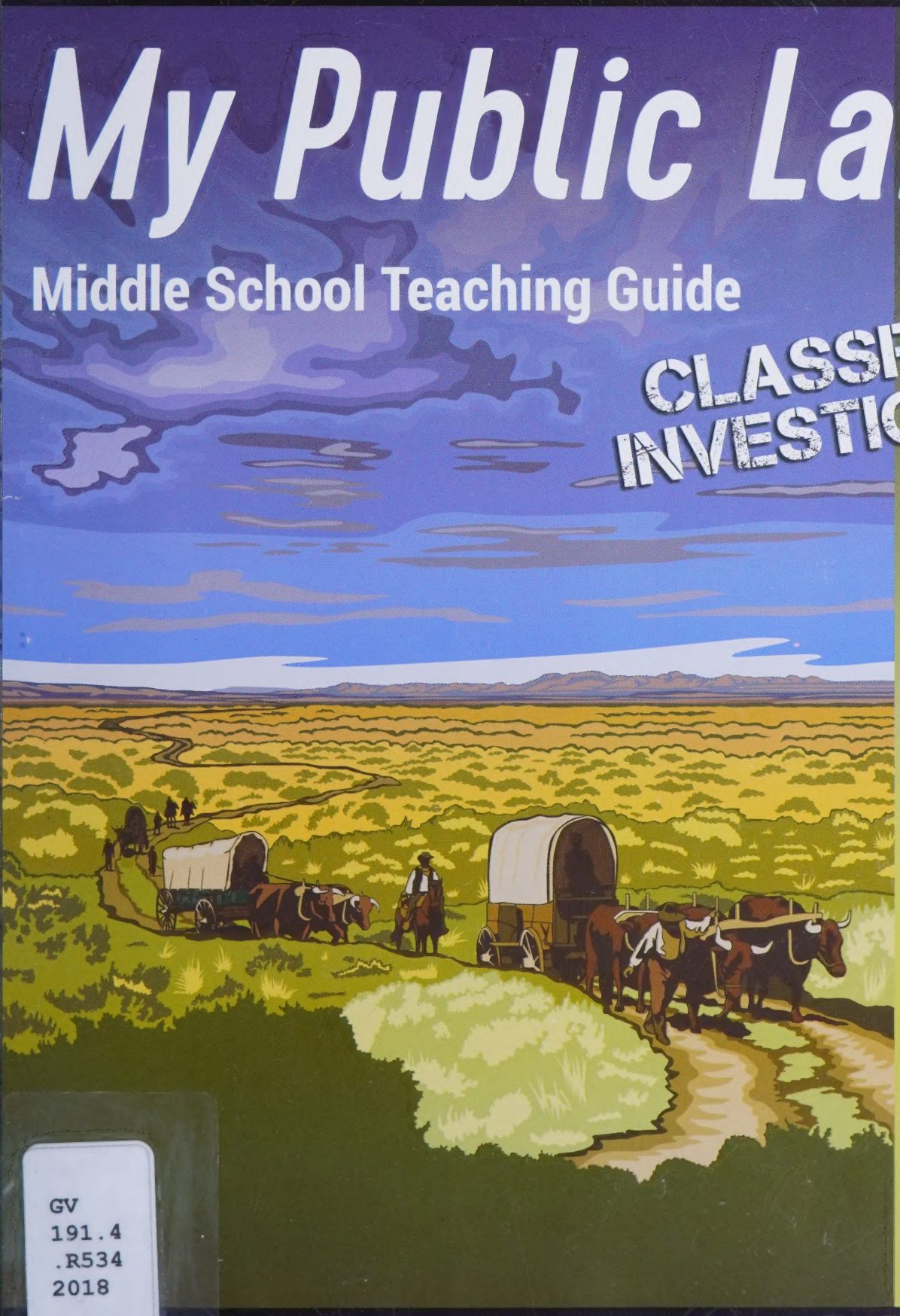
## Middle School Teaching Guide

## CLASSROOM INVESTIGATION



**America's Scenic and Historic Trails on Public Lands: The Intersection of Cultures, Heritage, and Outdoor Recreation**

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# Dear Teacher,

Welcome to this Classroom Investigation Series unit about America's national scenic and historic trails. The main goal of this teaching guide is for students to understand and appreciate their public lands through outdoor recreation and analysis of cultural interactions between emigrants and American Indians during westward expansion.

Through this teaching guide, students learn to locate national scenic and historic trails that they can visit with their families. Students also carefully read the inspirational language of the National Trails System Act, which motivates them to explore public lands and highlights the crucial role of volunteers in trail maintenance. Like other agencies in the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) values the significant contributions made by volunteers across public lands. Those who volunteer on public lands learn how multiple-use land management balances energy and mineral development, recreation, respect for Indian tribes and Alaska Natives, grazing, and habitat protection. Recreation and volunteer experiences on public lands can turn casual visitors into well-informed, lifelong allies of public lands who deeply understand the BLM's mission.

The final activity in the teaching guide shows students that there was no single way that American Indians and emigrants to the West interacted, contrary to media and movie portrayals. Students compare diary entries that describe a range of interactions between groups, from respectful cooperation to spiraling violence. The diaries present the complex interests and motivations that drove the behavior of emigrants and American Indians. As students gain an appreciation of this complicated history, they deepen their respect for American Indian culture. Ultimately, students understand the nation's special commitments to American Indian sovereignty, self-determination, and prosperity.

Although designed for middle school students, this unit can be adapted for high school and upper elementary levels. Civics and history teachers who are covering Western U.S. history, lawmaking, or cooperation and conflict between cultural groups may find the unit especially useful, as may language arts teachers who want to provide engaging primary source documents for their students.

The unit supports innovative strategies in education, such as:

**Social and emotional learning:** Students participate in small groups in which they work together, listen and speak to one another, and collaborate.

**Interdisciplinary instruction:** As they progress through the unit, students analyze maps to determine the nearest scenic or historic trail, practice persuasive communication skills, explore clauses of a statute, and interpret diary entries from people who traveled on historic trails.

Each activity takes 45 minutes to conduct, though they include extension ideas. The activities work best as a collective unit that progresses from introducing scenic and historic trails to parsing legislative language and diaries.

# Curriculum Connections

This unit addresses the following Common Core English Language Arts Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.3: Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

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This unit also supports standard D2.Civ.3.6-8 of the "College, Career, & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards," published by the National Council for the Social Studies: Examine the origins, purposes, and impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements.

The activities address the following essential understandings:

- Scenic and historic trails are open to all and are located near most Americans.
- The National Trails System is built upon four fundamental values: scenic, historic, natural, and cultural.
- Congress specified clear roles for citizens and groups in the National Trails System Act.
- Diaries of people who traveled on historic trails illuminate crucial elements of American history.

## About the Bureau of Land Management

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated $75 billion in sales of goods and services throughout the American economy in fiscal year 2016—more than any other agency in the Department of the Interior. These activities supported more than 372,000 jobs.

The Department of the Interior and the BLM carry out their overlapping missions by encouraging the responsible development of energy and minerals on public lands; working as good neighbors with partners and communities to promote multiple use on public lands; supporting working landscapes to boost employment; and providing access to hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, and other recreational opportunities. National scenic and historic trails are congressionally designated trails protected by the BLM and other land management agencies. BLM-managed trails contribute to visitors' health and enhance visitor appreciation for America's public lands. As visitors gain appreciation for public lands, they deepen their understanding of shared conservation stewardship, habitat preservation, and multiple-use management. Trails invite the public to conserve natural treasures while increasing public access to the outdoors.

## The Importance of Scenic and Historic Trails

National scenic and historic trails bring Americans outdoors and achieve two important outcomes. As stated in the National Trails System Act, trails "provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs" of Americans and help them fight a sedentary lifestyle. Whereas books, television shows, and other media promote awareness of historical events, trails invite people to walk where historic figures walked, thereby illuminating our shared past while recreating on public lands.

President Lyndon B. Johnson prompted Congress in 1965 to "copy the great Appalachian Trail in all parts of our country, and make full use of rights-of-way and other public paths." Congress responded in 1968 by passing the National Trails System Act. The act designated two national scenic trails and established the process and criteria for future designations. It also defined four categories of trails:

- **National recreation trails** "provide a variety of outdoor recreation uses in or reasonably accessible to urban areas."

- **National scenic trails** "provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails may pass."

- **National historic trails** are "extended trails which follow as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance."

- **Connecting or side trails** "provide additional points of public access to national recreation, national scenic or national historic trails or which will provide connections between such trails."

Visit ***https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationaltrailssystem/maps.htm*** for a map of all trails in the National Trails System. The map is designed to facilitate access to national scenic and historic trails.

In addition to managing significant portions of national scenic trails, the BLM is entrusted with managing more miles of national historic trails than any other agency. BLM responsibilities include managing 18 national trails (5 scenic and 13 historic), crossing nearly 6,000 miles of BLM public lands in 15 states. The BLM serves as interagency trail administrator, or trailwide lead, for the Iditarod, Old Spanish, and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trails. The BLM also supports five national trail-related visitor centers that tell the stories of the trails. Managing each trail across the landscape involves a mosaic of private lands and federal, state, tribal, and local governments, requiring extraordinary interagency and partner collaboration to connect every mile across urban, suburban, rural, and remote areas.

National historic trails tell the iconic stories of America, including exploration, western expansion and settlement, economic development, cultural divides, and the pursuit of religious freedom. These pathways of history and their associated settings are identified, protected, and interpreted by the BLM and volunteers for future generations. Physical remnants include wagon ruts, swales, wagon train encampments, structures, signature rocks, pioneer grave sites, skirmish sites, and artifacts such as period coins, weapons, household items, and tools.

America's prized National Trails System exemplifies shared stewardship and conservation through numerous trail partnerships; offers back-to-work employment opportunities along trails (e.g., trail maintenance and visitor services); and serves American families by providing outstanding recreational opportunities to enhance quality of life.

For more information about how the BLM manages national scenic and historic trails, including brief descriptions of the 18 trails protected by the BLM, visit ***https://www.blm.gov/node/4227***.

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# Activity 1, National Scenic and Historic Trails: Why and Where?

## Time Estimate

45 minutes

## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to (1) describe the four values underlying the National Trails System Act; (2) identify the location of the national scenic or historic trail closest to their school; and (3) describe the attractive features of that trail.

## For the Teacher

This activity addresses the following essential understandings:

- Scenic and historic trails are open to all and are located near most Americans.
- The National Trails System is built upon four fundamental values: scenic, historic, natural, and cultural.

## Overview

This is the first of three activities that addresses national scenic and historic trails. This activity introduces students to:

- The scale and location of national scenic and historic trails.
- The values outlined in the National Trails System Act.

## Teacher Preparation

1. Arrange for computers and an internet connection so students can find and research the nearest trail.
2. Make enough copies of the Activity 1 Handout for each student.
3. Provide flipchart paper and markers for five or six small groups.

## Procedure

1. Ask students what they see in their minds when they hear the word "trail." Ask students to discuss the trails they have visited, including how far they typically travel to get to trails, how often they visit trails, how much time they spend on trails after arriving, what they do on trails, and why they visit trails.
2. Discuss how their answers relate to the four values that shape the National Trails System Act: scenic, historic, natural, and cultural. Explain that the 1968 act created the National Trails System, designated two existing trails, and described the process for designating new trails.
3. Using a projector or individual computers, visit ***https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationaltrailssystem/maps.htm*** to find the scenic or historic trail closest to your school.
4. Once students identify the closest trail, distribute the Activity 1 Handout and divide students into groups of four or five, in which they will prepare and deliver a "radio ad" designed to attract visitors to the trail. The ad should include:
   - The distance of the trail from your school.
   - The approximate length of the trail and what visitors can do or see there.
   - The reason the trail was designated (which of the four values: scenic, historic, natural, and cultural).
   - Why people should visit the trail—what's fun, educational, or interesting about it.
5. Invite groups to "air" their 2-minute ads until all groups have presented.
6. Reconfigure the class into one unit and ask: What did you learn about the importance of trails? What features make a trail attractive to visitors?

## Assessment

Work with students to develop a rubric for the ads.

## Adaptations to Consider

- Ask students to produce alternative media to promote the nearest trail, such as a collage, website, or YouTube video.
- For steps 3 and 4, ask students to identify the five or six closest scenic and historic trails, and assign a unique trail for which each group should create a radio ad.
- Plan a field trip to hike a portion of the trail the class selected, and engage students in planning the trip as much as possible.

## Activity 1 Handout

# National Scenic and Historic Trails: Why and Where?

Based on the national scenic or historic trail nearest to your school, prepare and present a 2-minute radio advertisement that describes the trail. Be sure to include these items in your ad:

- The distance of the trail from your school.
- The approximate length of the trail and what visitors can do or see along the trail.
- The reason the trail was designated (which of the four values: scenic, historic, natural, and cultural).
- Why people should visit the trail—what's fun, educational, or interesting about it.

# Activity 2, The National Trails System Act: What and Why?

## Time Estimate

45 minutes

## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to (1) identify the reasons Congress passed the act and (2) describe the roles envisioned for citizens through the act.

## For the Teacher

This activity addresses the following essential understanding:

- Congress specified clear roles for citizens and groups in the National Trails System Act.

## Overview

This is the second of three activities that addresses national scenic and historic trails. This activity introduces students to:

- The rationale for the National Trails System Act of 1968.
- What the act says about how citizens can be involved in establishing and maintaining trails.

## Teacher Preparation

1. Read the background material, which describes citizen involvement in maintaining and publicizing trails.
2. Make enough copies of the Activity 2 Handout (front and back) for each student.

## Background

Each year, more than 25,000 volunteers help the BLM carry out its mission, and many maintain and promote scenic and historic trails. The following example describes how a group helped to maintain a BLM-managed trail in Oregon. In 2016, the BLM's Ashland Resource Area hosted an American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacation. These events give volunteers interested in trail work and recreation site maintenance a chance to give back to the places they love to visit. A 10-person volunteer crew camped for a week at the Hyatt Lake Recreation Area. During the day, volunteers performed routine maintenance work, such as removing downed trees, on the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.

## Procedure

1. Inform students that Congress passed a law in 1968 called the National Trails System Act, to define some trails as scenic and historic. The act also gave future lawmakers a set of standards for adding new trails.
2. Distribute the Activity 2 Handout, and ask students to read the excerpts from the act and answer the six discussion questions.
3. Pair students together so they can compare answers for 5 minutes. Note: Answers will vary for questions 1 and 2.
4. Ask each pair of students to join with another pair to describe how Congress attempted to bring to life the four values at the heart of the act: scenic, historic, natural, and cultural.
5. Reconfigure the class into one unit and ask (1) what did you learn by discussing the questions with other students, and (2) what specific actions can citizens take to be involved in the planning, development, maintenance, and management of trails?

## Assessment

- Circulate among pairs and groups to determine how well students are understanding the excerpts of the act.
- Assign this constructed response item: Which of the four values from the act (scenic, historic, natural, and cultural) is most relevant to the trail you selected in Activity 1, and how does the trail support that value?

## Activity 2 Handout

# National Trails System Act: What and Why?

**Directions:** Read the excerpts of the National Trails System Act, and answer the questions that follow.

**16 U.S.C. 1241:** Congressional statement of policy and declaration of purpose

(a) CONSIDERATIONS FOR DETERMINING ESTABLISHMENT OF TRAILS
In order to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population and in order to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation, trails should be established (i) primarily, near the urban areas of the Nation, and (ii) secondarily, within scenic areas and along historic travel routes of the Nation, which are often more remotely located.

(b) INITIAL COMPONENTS
The purpose of this chapter is to provide the means for attaining these objectives by instituting a national system of recreation, scenic and historic trails, by designating the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail as the initial components of that system, and by prescribing the methods by which, and standards according to which, additional components may be added to the system.

(c) VOLUNTEER CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT
The Congress recognizes the valuable contributions that volunteers and private, nonprofit trail groups have made to the development and maintenance of the Nation's trails. In recognition of these contributions, it is further the purpose of this chapter to encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, maintenance, and management, where appropriate, of trails.

**16 U.S.C. 1242:** National Trails System

(a) COMPOSITION: RECREATION TRAILS; SCENIC TRAILS; HISTORIC TRAILS; CONNECTING OR SIDE TRAILS; UNIFORM MARKERS

The national system of trails shall be composed of the following:

(1) National recreation trails...which will provide a variety of outdoor recreation uses in or reasonably accessible to urban areas.

(2) National scenic trails...which will be extended trails so located as to provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails may pass. National scenic trails may be located so as to represent desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, forest, and other areas, as well as landforms which exhibit significant characteristics of the physiographic regions of the Nation.

(3) National historic trails...which will be extended trails which follow as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance. National historic trails shall have as their purpose the identification and protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment.

**Questions**

1. What is the first reason given for the National Trails System Act in 16 U.S.C. 1241(a)? Why do you think urban areas are prioritized over more remote areas?

2. Do you agree that urban areas should receive priority? Why or why not?

3. In addition to establishing the Appalachian Trail and Pacific Crest Trail, what does 16 U.S.C. 1241(b) accomplish?

4. What does Congress encourage volunteer citizens to do regarding trails? Why does Congress encourage volunteer citizen involvement with scenic and historic trails? What specific trail maintenance and marketing tasks are appropriate for citizen volunteers and groups?

5. In what kinds of locations should national scenic trails be established? Why?

6. What is the purpose for creating national historic trails?

# Activity 3, In Their Own Words: Culture and Conflict on the Trails

## Time Estimate

45 minutes

## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to (1) identify various types of primary source documents that describe the interactions between emigrants and American Indians and (2) assess what primary source documents say about conflicts between the two groups of people and how those conflicts were addressed.

## For the Teacher

This activity addresses the following essential understanding:

- Diaries of people who traveled on historic trails illuminate crucial elements of American history.

## Overview

This is the third of three activities that addresses national scenic and historic trails. This activity introduces students to:

- Primary source documents that illuminate the interactions between American Indians and emigrants who headed west on trails.
- Diverse perspectives on conflicts between emigrants and American Indians.

## Teacher Preparation

1. Make copies of the Activity 3 Handout—there are five versions (A through E). Make enough copies for each small group.

## Procedure

1. Point out that one way to understand part of America's story is to examine how people described the historical events they lived through. Historic trails encourage us to investigate our heritage and how key events helped shape the nation's development.
2. Explain that the trails brought diverse cultural, religious, ethnic, and national groups into contact with each other. Along the trails, American Indian and European American cultures intersected, resulting in varying degrees of cooperation and conflict. Explain that students will look at primary source documents to gain an understanding of the cultural interaction. Documents describe experiences of European Americans and American Indians.
3. Divide the class into five equal-sized groups. Distribute Handouts A through E by group so that each student has a copy of the appropriate handout. Give students about 10 minutes to silently read the handout.
4. Ask students to follow the directions on the handout. For the next 15-20 minutes, their job is to determine a conflict level rating and answer questions at the bottom of their handout.
5. Ask each group to select a spokesperson. Provide 5 minutes for each spokesperson to report out on their group's discussion and decision. Prompt them to cite the documents to support their decision.
6. Reconvene the entire class into one unit. Ask whether they think the five diary entries, overall, suggest more cooperation between cultures than violent conflict.

## Assessment

- Have students write their own "diary entry" that describes an episode in their lives that involved cross-cultural cooperation or conflict. Students should include how assumptions, communication challenges, or common interests affected the experience and compare the historic diary entry to their own "diary entry."
- Have students assume that they are newspaper or radio reporters with a chance to interview their favorite diarist of the five. Ask them to develop a set of at least 10 interview questions they would ask that diarist.
- Have students hike a nearby trail with friends or family (or go on an organized field trip) and report back on:
  - What types of information were on the interpretive trail signs? Also, what does the trail's website say about the history of the area?
  - How challenging would the trail have been for a wagon train to use?
  - What clues are along the trail about how people lived in the past (e.g., were there rock fences or water sources, and what might such clues reveal about how people used the land)?

## Alternatives to Consider

- Instead of having groups report out to the entire class for step 5, regroup students so that each new group has one student who can explain each of the diary entries (that is, each new group would have one student who read the Clayton diary, one who read the Whitman diary, one who read the Delano diary, and so forth). In the new groups, give each student 2 minutes to explain the diary entry he or she read.

- Refer students back to the trail they identified in Activity 1 (or, if they identified a scenic trail, ask them to find the nearest historic trail). Ask students to research and discuss or write about these questions:
  - What historic event does the trail commemorate?
  - Why is it important for people to know about this event?

## Activity 3 Handout, Group A

# In Their Own Words: Culture and Conflict on the Trails

There is no denying that there were brutal aspects of Indian-emigrant relations and a cultural clash as settlers moved into native lands. However, countless records show that peaceful relationships and visits were also common among Indians and emigrants. Many emigrants found that Indians were more interested in trading than violence. Food was often the primary motivation, with Indians providing emigrants much needed supplies. In return, Indians sought clothing, firearms, and small items, such as mirrors, tin cups, fishhooks, or metal tools. Emigrants often employed Indians to herd livestock, act as guides, or assist in river crossings. Meetings between Indians and emigrants were regularly peaceful and mutually advantageous. Indian culture, at the time, did not record written accounts of their history. As a result, much of the information comes from records of white European Americans.

**Directions:** Read the Clayton diary entry to yourself, decide whether the diary entry supports the "cooperation" theme using the scale, and discuss the questions with others in your group. Select a spokesperson who will explain your group's diary entry and answers to the rest of the class.

**William Clayton Diary Entry**

"At 1:00 p.m. the encampment was formed on the bank of the lake and a guard instantly placed at the passes, as many of the Indians had followed us…One of the Indians presented several certificates from persons who had previously traveled through their village, all certifying that the Grand Chief of the Pawnees was friendly disposed, and they had made him presents of a little powder, lead, salt, etc. Heber gave them a little tobacco, and a little salt. President Young gave to the chief, some powder, lead, salt and a number of the brethren gave a little flour each. The old chief, however, did not seem to think the presents sufficient, and said he did not like us to go west through their country, he was afraid we should kill their buffalo and drive them off. Brother Shumway told him we did not like buffalo, but this does not appear to give him much satisfaction. However, there was no appearance of hostility. In fact, all that came to camp seemed highly pleased to shake hands with our brethren and would run from one side to another so as not to miss one…Brother Shumway says there are about twelve thousand of the Pawnees in this neighborhood, and it is reported that there are five thousand warriors. We did not see many of them…We have no fear, however, because their only object appears to be plunder, and it is the calculation to be well prepared by night and day."

**Citation:** Clayton, W. 1921. *William Clayton's Journal: A Daily Record of the Journey of the Original Company of "Mormon" Pioneers from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake*. Salt Lake City: The Deseret News.

## Activity 3 Handout, Group A (continued)

Using the scale below, assign the diary entry a number from 1 to 5, and explain your rating with evidence from Clayton's words.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Emigrants and American Indians were in constant violent conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had misunderstandings and occasional conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had conflicts but worked them out peacefully. | Emigrants and American Indians resolved most conflicts with one side benefiting more than the other. | Emigrants and American Indians found a way to work out conflicts to the benefit of both sides. |

**Questions:**

- What is the cause of the conflict between the Mormon pioneers and the American Indians? Why does Clayton say the Mormon pioneers do not fear violent conflict with the Pawnees?

- To what extent would you say there is trust and respect between the emigrants and American Indians? Cite evidence from the diary.

## Activity 3 Handout, Group B

# In Their Own Words: Culture and Conflict on the Trails

There is no denying that there were brutal aspects of Indian-emigrant relations and a cultural clash as settlers moved into native lands. However, countless records show that peaceful relationships and visits were also common among Indians and emigrants. Many emigrants found that Indians were more interested in trading than violence. Food was often the primary motivation, with Indians providing emigrants much needed supplies. In return, Indians sought clothing, firearms, and small items, such as mirrors, tin cups, fishhooks, or metal tools. Emigrants often employed Indians to herd livestock, act as guides, or assist in river crossings. Meetings between Indians and emigrants were regularly peaceful and mutually advantageous. Indian culture, at the time, did not record written accounts of their history. As a result, much of the information comes from records of white European Americans.

**Directions:** Read the Whitman diary entry to yourself, decide whether the diary entry supports the "cooperation" theme using the scale, and discuss the questions with others in your group. Select a spokesperson who will explain your group's diary entry and answers to the rest of the class.

**Narcissa Whitman Diary Entry**

July 27, 1836: "Have had no game of any kind except a few messes of antelope, which an Indian gave us. We have plenty of dried buffalo meat, which we have purchased from the Indians - and dry it is for me. It appears so filthy! I can scarcely eat it; but it keeps us alive, and we ought to be thankful for it...Do not think I regret coming. No, far from it; I would not go back for a world. I am contented and happy, notwithstanding I sometimes get very hungry and weary. Have six week's steady journey before us. Feel sometimes as if it were a long time to be traveling. Long for rest, but must not murmur. Feel to pity the poor Indian women, who are continually traveling in this manner during their lives, and know no other comfort. They do all the work and are the complete slaves of their husbands. I am making some little progress in their language; long to be able to converse with them about the Saviour."

July 29: "Mr. Gray was quite sick this morning and inclined to fall behind. Husband and I rode with him about two hours and a half, soon after which he gave out entirely. I was sent on, and soon after husband left him to come and get the cart; but I overtook an Indian, who went back and soon met husband, and both returned to Mr. Gray. The Indian helped him on his horse, got on behind him, supported him in his arms and in this manner slowly came into camp. This was welcome relief, and all rejoiced to see them come in; for some of us had been riding seven hours, others eight, without any nourishment."

**Citation:** Whitman, N. 2001. The Letters and Journals of Narcissa Whitman, 1836-1847. *https://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/two/whitman1.htm#062736.*

## Activity 3 Handout, Group B (continued)

Using the scale below, assign the diary entry a number from 1 to 5, and explain your rating with evidence from Whitman's words.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Emigrants and American Indians were in constant violent conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had misunderstandings and occasional conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had conflicts but worked them out peacefully. | Emigrants and American Indians resolved most conflicts with one side benefiting more than the other. | Emigrants and American Indians found a way to work out conflicts to the benefit of both sides. |

**Questions:**

- How fairly does Whitman think American Indian women are treated? Cite evidence from the diary.

- How does Whitman seem to feel about the Indian who helped Mr. Gray? Cite evidence from the diary.

## Activity 3 Handout, Group C

# In Their Own Words: Culture and Conflict on the Trails

There is no denying that there were brutal aspects of Indian-emigrant relations and a cultural clash as settlers moved into native lands. However, countless records show that peaceful relationships and visits were also common among Indians and emigrants. Many emigrants found that Indians were more interested in trading than violence. Food was often the primary motivation, with Indians providing emigrants much needed supplies. In return, Indians sought clothing, firearms, and small items, such as mirrors, tin cups, fishhooks, or metal tools. Emigrants often employed Indians to herd livestock, act as guides, or assist in river crossings. Meetings between Indians and emigrants were regularly peaceful and mutually advantageous. Indian culture, at the time, did not record written accounts of their history. As a result, much of the information comes from records of white European Americans.

**Directions:** Read the Tul-lux Hol-li-quilla testimony description to yourself, decide whether the testimony supports the "cooperation" theme using the scale, and discuss the questions with others in your group. Select a spokesperson who will explain your group's entry and answers to the rest of the class.

**Tul-lux Hol-li-quilla Testimony Description**
According to the court reporter who documented the testimony, Tul-lux Hol-li-quilla "says that he was present at the signing of the treaty with the Warm Springs Indians, at the Dalles, Oregon.... he knows that said treaty reserved the rights of his tribe to fish at their usual and accustomed places."

The court reporter quotes Tul-lux Hol-li-quilla as saying, "I went into the room where [Superintendent of Indian Affairs] Huntington was and he explained to me that he had a paper which he wanted me to sign...that the said paper would protect us when leaving the agency, when fishing, hunting or gathering berries; that if we would sign the paper passes would be issued whenever we left the reservation, which would show the white men that we were not Piutes and it was with this understanding that I signed the paper presented, by Huntington. Absolutely nothing whatever was said by Huntington, or anyone else present at the said meeting, concerning our fishing rights or fishery. I am sure that we would have refused to sign any papers that would take from us such a precious right; that it was about a year later when we learned...that Huntington had deceived us and induced us to sign away our fishing rights."

**Citation:** Bureau of Indian Affairs. 1915. *Affidavit of Tul-lux Hol-li-quilla regarding the treaties of 1855 and 1865.* Bureau of Indian Affairs, Warm Springs, OR.

## Activity 3 Handout, Group C (continued)

Using the scale below, assign the testimony a number from 1 to 5, and explain your rating with evidence from Tul-lux Hol-li-quilla's words.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Emigrants and American Indians were in constant violent conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had misunderstandings and occasional conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had conflicts but worked them out peacefully. | Emigrants and American Indians resolved most conflicts with one side benefiting more than the other. | Emigrants and American Indians found a way to work out conflicts to the benefit of both sides. |

**Questions:**

- What did Tul-lux Hol-li-quilla think the Warm Springs Indians would gain by signing the treaty?

- How does he say they lost their fishing rights?

## Activity 3 Handout, Group D

# In Their Own Words: Culture and Conflict on the Trails

There is no denying that there were brutal aspects of Indian-emigrant relations and a cultural clash as settlers moved into native lands. However, countless records show that peaceful relationships and visits were also common among Indians and emigrants. Many emigrants found that Indians were more interested in trading than violence. Food was often the primary motivation, with Indians providing emigrants much needed supplies. In return, Indians sought clothing, firearms, and small items, such as mirrors, tin cups, fishhooks, or metal tools. Emigrants often employed Indians to herd livestock, act as guides, or assist in river crossings. Meetings between Indians and emigrants were regularly peaceful and mutually advantageous. Indian culture, at the time, did not record written accounts of their history. As a result, much of the information comes from records of white European Americans.

**Directions:** Read the Burnett diary entry to yourself, decide whether the diary entry supports the "cooperation" theme using the scale, and discuss the questions with others in your group. Select a spokesperson who will explain your group's diary entry and answers to the rest of the class.

**Peter Burnett Diary Entry**

"At the fort we found the Cheyenne chief and some of his people. He was a tall, trim, noble-looking Indian, aged about thirty. The Cheyennes at that time boasted that they had never shed the blood of the white man. He went alone very freely among our people, and I happened to meet him at one of our camps, where there was a foolish, rash young man, who wantonly insulted the chief. Though the chief did not understand the insulting words, he clearly understood the insulting tone and gestures. I saw from the expression of his countenance that the chief was most indignant, though perfectly cool and brave. He made no reply in words, but walked away slowly; and when some twenty feet from the man who had insulted him, he turned around, and solemly and slowly shook the forefinger of his right hand at the young man several times, as much as to say, 'I will attend to your case.'

I saw there was trouble coming, and I followed the chief, and by kind earnest gestures made him understand at last that this young man was considered by us all as a half-witted fool, unworthy of the notice of any sensible man; and that we never paid attention to what he said, as we hardly considered him responsible for his language. The moment the chief comprehended my meaning I saw a change come over his countenance, and he went away perfectly satisfied. He was a clear-headed man; and, though unlettered, he understood human nature."

**Citation:** Burnett, P.H. 1880. *Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer*. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

## Activity 3 Handout, Group D (continued)

Using the scale below, assign the diary entry a number from 1 to 5, and explain your rating with evidence from Burnett's words.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Emigrants and American Indians were in constant violent conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had misunderstandings and occasional conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had conflicts but worked them out peacefully. | Emigrants and American Indians resolved most conflicts with one side benefiting more than the other. | Emigrants and American Indians found a way to work out conflicts to the benefit of both sides. |

**Questions:**

- What almost sparked a violent conflict between the young man and the Cheyenne chief, and how did Burnett manage to prevent a violent outcome?

- To what extent would you say there is trust and respect between the emigrants and American Indians? Cite evidence from Burnett's recollections.

## Activity 3 Handout, Group E

# In Their Own Words: Culture and Conflict on the Trails

There is no denying that there were brutal aspects of Indian-emigrant relations and a cultural clash as settlers moved into native lands. However, countless records show that peaceful relationships and visits were also common among Indians and emigrants. Many emigrants found that Indians were more interested in trading than violence. Food was often the primary motivation, with Indians providing emigrants much needed supplies. In return, Indians sought clothing, firearms, and small items, such as mirrors, tin cups, fishhooks, or metal tools. Emigrants often employed Indians to herd livestock, act as guides, or assist in river crossings. Meetings between Indians and emigrants were regularly peaceful and mutually advantageous. Indian culture, at the time, did not record written accounts of their history. As a result, much of the information comes from records of white European Americans.

**Directions:** Read the Delano diary entry to yourself, decide whether the diary entry supports the "cooperation" theme using the scale, and discuss the questions with others in your group. Select a spokesperson who will explain your group's diary entry and answers to the rest of the class.

**Alonzo Delano Diary Entry**

"A difficulty soon occurred between them and the Indians, which ended in bloodshed, and was the commencement of a warfare, which of course eventually terminated in favor of the whites. An Indian stole an axe from the tent of a miner, who, on missing it, went to a village a mile or two distant, and with threatening language demanded its restoration, when an Indian who had not been guilty of the theft went into the wigwam and brought it out. The miner, instead of receiving it quietly, began to beat the Indian. This so enraged him, that when the miner turned to go, he seized his bow and shot his assailant dead. A few days afterwards two men were hunting mules in the neighborhood, and becoming separated, one of them was shot dead with an arrow, while the other being assaulted, effected his escape.

In addition to these outrages, the Indians had taken mules and cattle, and it became unsafe to risk life or property in immediate proximity with them. Under these circumstances it was deemed best to give them a severe lesson, and a party proceeded, well armed, to their village, and in a skirmish killed five or six Indians, and destroyed their houses."

**Citation:** Delano, A. 1857. *Life on the Plains and among the Diggings*. New York: Miller, Orton & Co.

## Activity 3 Handout, Group E (continued)

Using the scale below, assign the diary entry a number from 1 to 5, and explain your rating with evidence from Delano's words.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Emigrants and American Indians were in constant violent conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had misunderstandings and occasional conflict. | Emigrants and American Indians had conflicts but worked them out peacefully. | Emigrants and American Indians resolved most conflicts with one side benefiting more than the other. | Emigrants and American Indians found a way to work out conflicts to the benefit of both sides. |

**Questions:**

- What sparked the violent conflict between the emigrants and American Indians?

- Do you think the cycle of revenge continued or stopped after the last "skirmish" described?

# For Further Research

**Historical Trails:** *https://www.oregontrailcenter.org/HistoricalTrails/Indians.htm*

**Native Americans on the Oregon Trail:** *http://oregontrail101.com/native.html*

**Disrupting the Natives: Changes to the Native American Way of Life**: *http://www.octa-trails.org/articles/disrupting-the-natives*

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